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Remarks: Presentation to Herbert E. Meyer -- The National Intelligence
Distinguished Service Medal, 25 April 1986

I am pleased to welcome you -- and to join you -- in honoring Herb Meyer this morning. He not only performed splendidly during his four year stint here but, even better, made me look good -- because I had personally picked him.

I first knew Herb as a well-educated, bright and brash young journalist, an associate editor of Fortune who had just written a book on world affairs full of optimism about America's future. I coerced Herb into joining the intelligence business early in 1982 as my Special Assistant, where his drive, razor sharp mind, personal counsel, self-starting proclivities, and very fast pen helped me in more ways than I can express. He did so well, in fact, that at the start of 1983 I asked him to bring those skills to the job of Vice Chairman of the National Intelligence Council, one of the key enterprises of this intelligence business. There Herb served with great distinction until the end of 1985, continuing to display the above skills, heightening the NIC's vigor, increasing its production, sharpening its policy relevance, very often questioning conventional wisdom, and sometimes breaking crockery -- but always advancing the horizons and purposes of intelligence.

We were very sorry to see him succumb a few months ago to the enticements of the entrepreneurial world -- that is, to excitement, opportunity, and greed -- but we wish him every good fortune there. We know he'll do well. Anyone who can think and act as quickly as he does, and who is so very sure about who is striking whom in the world, will do well. Indeed, he will be able tangibly to prove his own intense certainty about capitalism's great and superior power -- and Communism's coming collapse. In business, as he was in the CIA, I'm sure he'll remain an unreconstructed conservative -- but an optimistic one. That is, someone who remains ever optimistic about America -- and is ever ready to bash crepe hangers or the faint-hearted.

It is my deep personal pleasure to wish Herb and his lovely family a fine future, and to thank him for an extraordinarily fine past, by presenting him the National Intelligence Distinguished Service Medal.